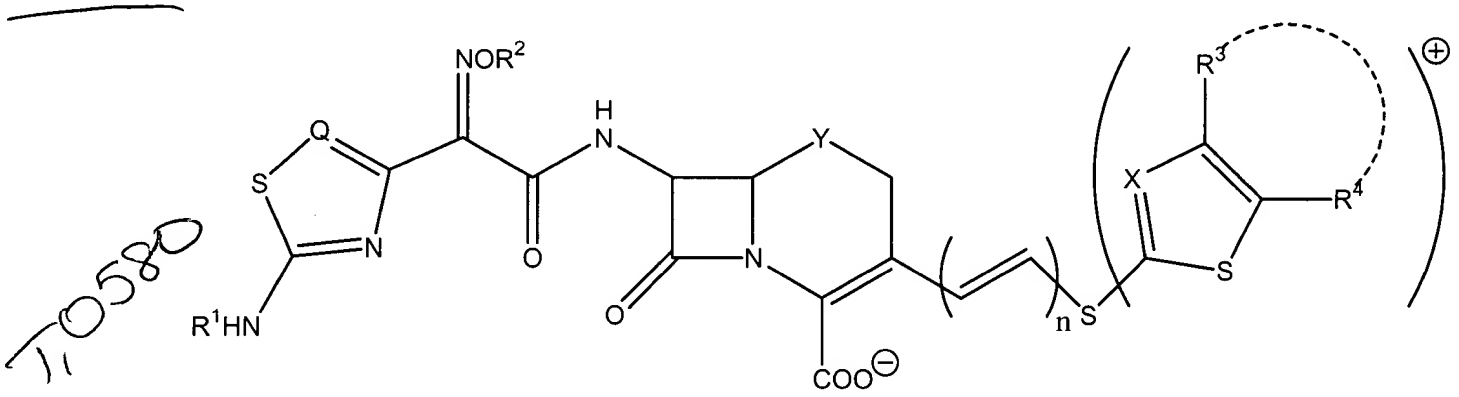
1. (TWICE AMENDED) A compound of the formula:



wherein R^1 is a phosphono group;

R^2 is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkyl group or a C_{3-5} cycloalkyl group;

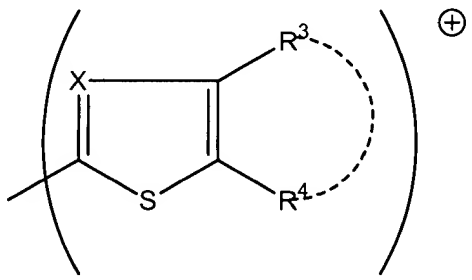
each of Q and X is a nitrogen atom or CH;

Y is S;

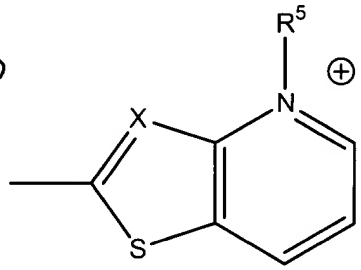
n is 0 or 1;

one of R^3 and R^4 is a pyridinium group which may be substituted and the other is a hydrogen atom or a hydrocarbon group which may be substituted, or R^3 and R^4 taken together may form a quaternized nitrogen-containing heterocyclic ring which may be substituted,

wherein when R^3 and R^4 are taken together, the group of the formula



is



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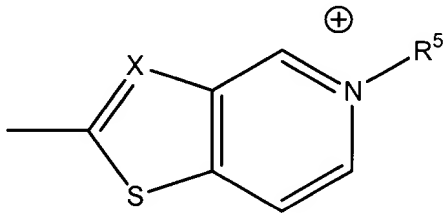

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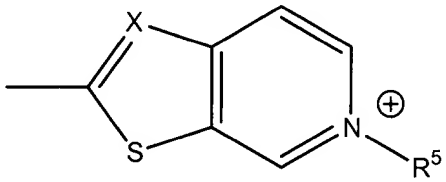
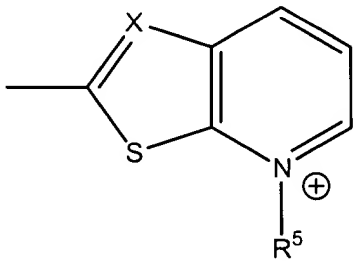


or



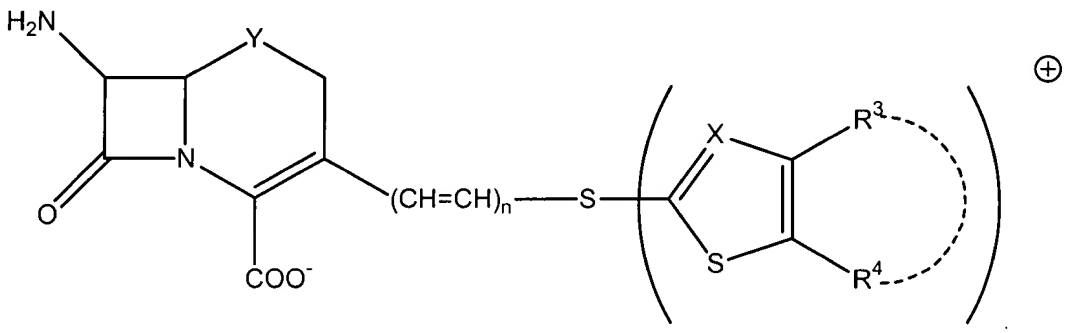
wherein R^5 is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group;

or salt thereof.

(THRICE AMENDED) 7β-[2(Z)-ethoxyimino-2-(5-phosphonoamino-1,2,4-thiadiazole-3-yl)acetamido]-3-[4-(1-methyl-4-pyridinio)-2-thiazolylthio]-3-cephem-4-carboxylate or its salt.

13. (TWICE AMENDED) A compound as claimed in claim 1, which is 7 β - [2(Z)-fluoromethoxyimino-2-(5-phophonoamino-1,2,4-thiadiazole-3-yl)acetamido]-3-[4-(1-methyl-4-pyridinio)-2-thiazolylthio]-3-cephem-4-carboxylate or its salt.

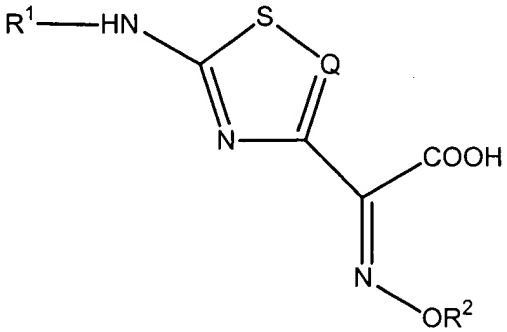
14. (AMENDED) A method for producing a compound as claimed in claim 1, which comprises reacting a compound of the formula:



or its salt;

wherein each symbol has the meaning given in claim 1;

with a compound of the formula:



its salt or its reactive derivative;

wherein each symbol has the meaning given in claim 1.